



W. CRAIG VANDERWAGEN, M.D.

Assistant Surgeon General

Chief Medical Officer (Acting)

Indian Health Service

W. Craig Vanderwagen, M.D., began his career with the Indian Health Service (IHS), an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), in 1981. His initial assignment was in the IHS Albuquerque Area Office as a General Medical Officer of the Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, at the Zuni Indian Hospital. He currently holds the rank of Rear Admiral.

In January 2001, he was selected as Acting Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of the agency. Dr. Vanderwagen's duties as CMO include providing medical advice and guidance to the Office of the Director and staff on American Indian and Alaska Native health care policies and issues. He is the primary liaison and advocate for IHS field clinical programs and community based health professionals. He provides national and international health care leadership and representation for the agency. In addition, he ensures that patient care and medical standards and concerns are represented in the decision-making process of the agency. Dr. Vanderwagen also establishes professional contacts with medical, education, and physician organizations.

Before assuming his duties as CMO, Dr. Vanderwagen served as the Director for the Office of Clinical and Preventive Services (OCPS), and was responsible for the full scope of clinical health care programs, including quality assurance and preventive programs. The OCPS issues technical and policy guidance for IHS direct and tribal health programs, for a wide variety of health care programs, including alcohol and substance abuse, dental services, diabetes and other chronic disease prevention, mental health, emergency medical services, nutrition and dietetics, nursing services, pharmacy services, and maternal and child health.

Dr. Vanderwagen has received many awards and commendations since he began working for the IHS. In September 1999, Dr. Vanderwagen was selected by the Surgeon General to a 4-year term as the Chief Professional Officer for the Medical Category of the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS). This role is a critical leadership role in the USPHS and serves as the Deputy Chief Medical Officer for the USPHS in support of the Surgeon General.

Dr. Vanderwagen has been a consultant for the Pan American Health Organization on Indigenous health issues. He directed a portion of health care provided to Kosovar refugees during the Balkans conflict in 1999. He has also served as the Chief of Public Health for the Coalition Provisional Authority and the Ministry of Health in Iraq. In February 2005, he led the public health team deployed on USNS Mercy to Indonesia to assist in the Tsunami recovery. From August to November 2005, he led the federal health response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in Louisiana.

Dr. Vanderwagen is a board-certified family physician. He is published in several medical journals covering family practice, including, *Medical Education*, *Children Today*, and *Hospital and Community Psychiatry*. Dr. Vanderwagen is a frequent speaker to medical students and the general public on the techniques employed by the IHS to elevate the health status of American Indians and Alaska Natives.